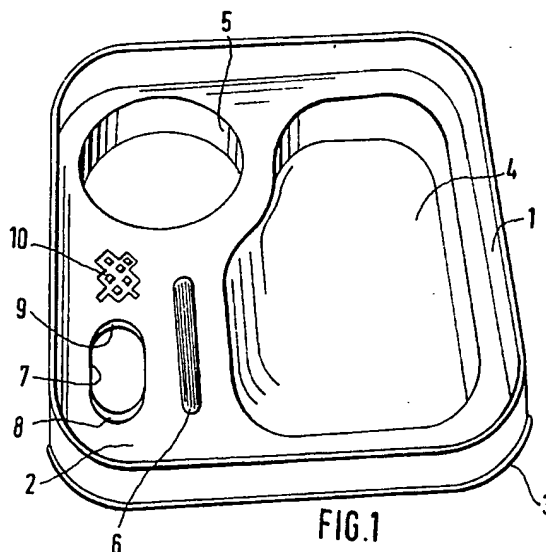


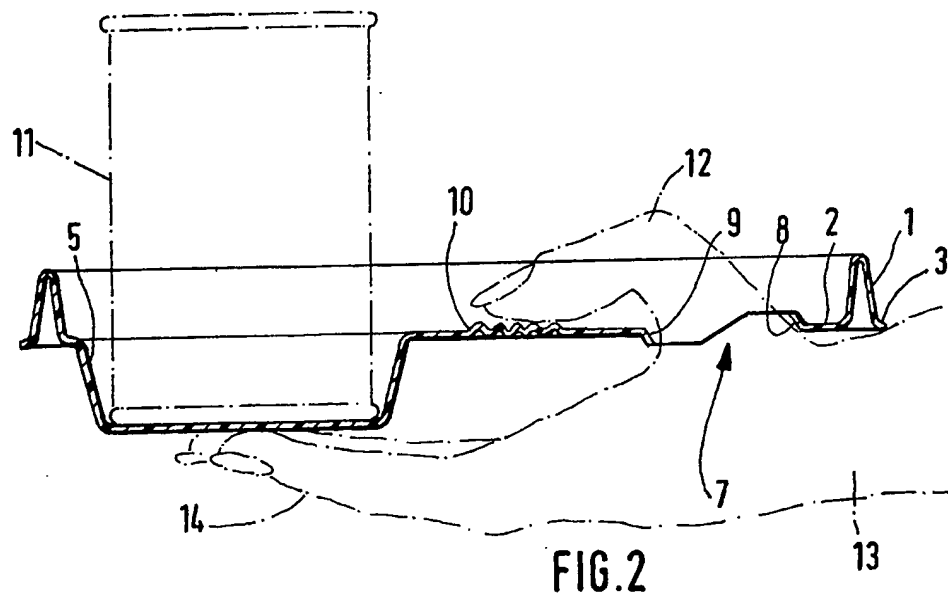
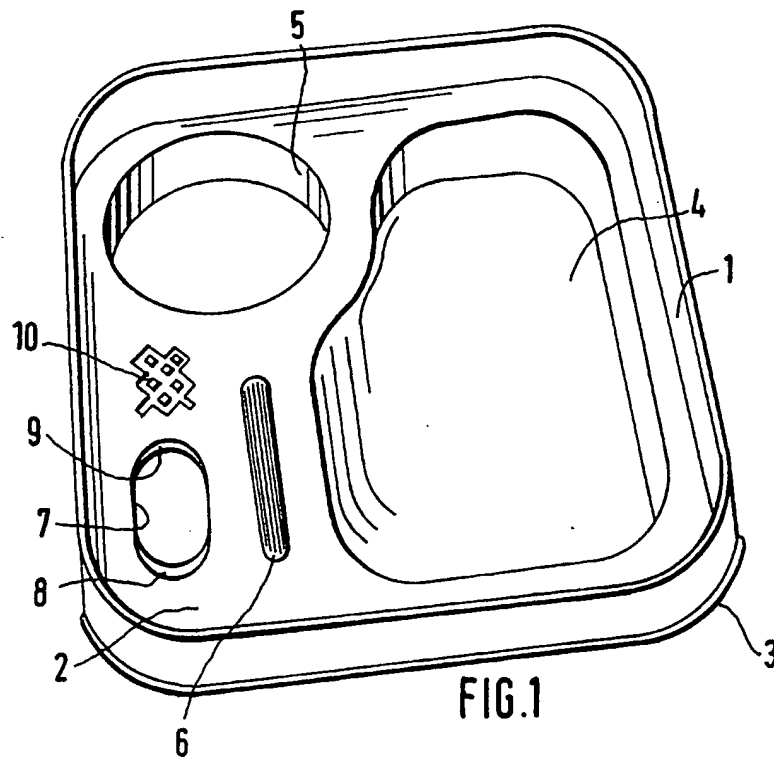
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(54) Serving tray

(57) The present invention relates to a serving tray for the serving of a meal consisting of a plurality of components such as at least one dish and at least one drink in a drinking vessel 11, the tray comprising a number of recesses 4, 5 for the components of the meal. A hole 7 extends through the tray for the insertion of the thumb of a hand so that the tray can be carried with the thumb on the upper side 10 of the tray, and a downwardly facing surface 5 is provided against which the fingers can rest and support the corresponding portion of the underside of the tray.



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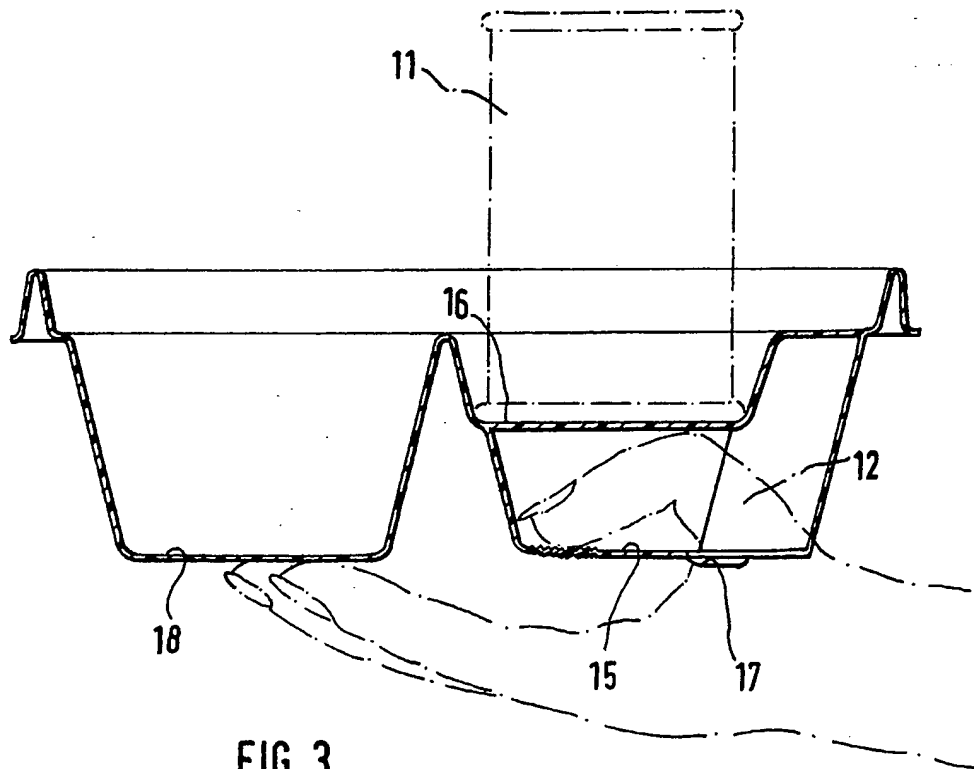


FIG. 3

## SPECIFICATION

### Serving tray

5 The present invention relates to a serving tray for serving dishes as hot dogs and similar.

By most meals a plate or similar is necessary for the dish and the plate in turn needs a surface to be placed on by example the surface of a table. On the surface is also placed fork and knife, drinking glass and other accessories for the meal. However, in certain cases a surface is not available for example by serving meals as hot dogs and hamburgers from stands. By such meals it is common to suit the dish to the circumstances by serving food consisting of only one kind as a hot dog without potatoes or salad and by serving the meal without any drink.

By dishes, however, by which serving vessel is necessary, disposable plates or cups are used. By holding such vessel during said circumstances the one hand is occupied to hold the vessel and the other has to be used for the fork or similar and there will be no possibility to hold a drinking cup. The disadvantage by such disposable serving vessel is that it can be difficult to hold when containing a hot dish as the heat is conducted to the outer surfaces of the vessel where the fingers are placed.

The object of the present invention is to provide preferably a disposable serving tray provided for the carrying of at least one dish and at least one drinking vessel and which tray is arranged so it can be held in a secure grip in a convenient way.

A further object of the invention is to provide a serving tray which can be held in portions of the same which are not utilized for the carrying of a hot dish.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a tray which can be made in a thin, cheap material with low stiffness and which in spite of this is provided to carry a drinking vessel as well as a dish without the need to hold the tray at the portion at which the dish is placed.

In the accompanying drawings two embodiments of the invention are shown. In

Fig. 1 the serving tray is shown in perspective and in

Fig. 2 the serving tray is shown in a section along the line II-II in Fig. 1. Fig. 3 shows a second embodiment.

50 According to the figures the serving tray is formed of a shaped piece of thin material preferably a plastic sheet shaped by means of a vacuum method. Outmost along the border of the tray an upwards pointing frame 1 is stretching which encloses the proper tray surface 2. The frame 1 is at the inside pointing upwards from the surface 2 and is at the outside stretching back down to the level of the surface 2 and terminates in a outwards pointing border 3 which makes it possible to separate the tray of the shaping from the sheet of the material by means of punching. From the surface 2 a bowl 4 and a circular basin 5 formed in the material are pointing downwards.

There is also a recess 6 which also is formed in the same piece of material. The basin 5 and the recess 6 and the bowl 4 are provided with bottoms which are

formed of the lower portion of the piece of material.

At the border of the tray an elongated hole 7 the edge 8 of which is pointing to the frame is bent upwards and which opposite edge 9 is pointing downwards. Opposite to the edge 9 is a corrugated surface 10 provided.

70 According to the second embodiment shown in Fig. 3 a recess 15 similar to the circular basin 5 in Figs. 1 and 2 is formed with a step 16. In the bottom of the basin 15 is a hole 17 similar to the hole 7 in Figs. 1 and 2. Also the tray of the second embodiment has a recess 18 similar to the recess 4 for a dish and a frame. However, the hole 7 is replaced by the hole 17.

80 By use of the tray a dish can be arranged in the recess 4 and a lemonade or beer can 11 or other drink can be placed in the recess 5 respectively 15. The recess 6 can be used for holding a napkin or other accessories. When one desires to eat the meal the thumb 12 of the left hand 13 is inserted in the hole 7 or 17 respectively. The rest of the fingers 14 of the hand are resting against the bottom of the basin 5 (or surface on underside of recess 18). The corrugated surface 10 is provided for the resting of the thumb. The edges 8 and 9 of the hole 7 (and 17) which are pointing upwards and downwards provide that neither the outside nor the inside of the thumb will rest against any sharp edge.

By means of said grip the tray can be held in a very 95 secure and convenient way even if the tray is relatively weak by using a thin and flexible material. The drinking vessel which is relatively heavy is carried without deforming of the tray as the fingers of the hand are used as support under the basin 5. By the second embodiment the drinking vessel is placed in the basin 15 and will rest on the step 16 which leaves place for the thumb at the bottom of the basin. By this embodiment the drinking vessel is carried directly by the thumb without any tendency to deform the tray. The recess 4 is supported in a rigid way by the material of the tray by means of the high frame 1. The fact that the recess 4 is partly enclosing the basin 5 which is supported by the fingers, will also increase the rigidity of the tray. As the thumb is inserted in the hole 7 (or 17) the risk that the grip is loosened and the tray will fall down is eliminated.

100 The tray is to be designed according to the type of meal which it is intended for. The essential part of the tray according to the invention is the grip for the thumb in the form of a hole which makes the secure grip possible. Important is also the possibility to directly support the heaviest part of the tray where the drinking vessel is placed. The number and the form of the bowls and other recesses can be varied within wide limits.

105 The second embodiment according to the Fig. 3 has the advantage that no space is needed for the thumb hole which is placed under the place for the drinking vessel. By this embodiment the space used for the thumb hole according to Fig. 1 can be used for a recess for a cold dish as a salad without the need to enlarge the tray.

### CLAIMS

1. Serving tray for the serving of a meal consisting of more components as at least one dish and at

least one drink in a drinking vessel the tray comprising a number of recesses in the form of bowls for the components of the meal, through which tray a hole is stretching, and provided in shape and size to form an opening for the insertion of the thumb of a hand so that the tray can be carried with the thumb on the upper side of the tray while for the rest of the hand is provided a downwards pointing surface against which the hand can rest and support the corresponding portion of the underside of the tray.

2. Serving tray according to claim 1 in which the hole is showing a first edge which is pointing against the border of the tray and is provided with a border portion which is pointing upwards from the upper side of the tray and which by means of a rounded edge connects to the underside of the tray and an opposite second edge which is pointing towards one of said recesses and is provided with a border portion pointing downwards from the underside of the tray and which by means of a rounded edge connects to the upper side of the tray.

3. Serving tray according to claim 2 in which the recess towards which the second edge of the hole is pointing is arranged for carrying a drinking vessel and which recess is placed in such relation to said second edge of the hole that when the thumb in the intended way is inserted in the hole the fingers of the hand can rest against the underside of the recess.

4. Serving tray according to claim 3 and comprising at least one recess intended to contain a hot dish in which said recess for the hot dish is on a distance from the normal place where the fingers of the hand will rest when the thumb of the hand is inserted in said hole in the intended way.

5. Serving tray according to claim 1 comprising a least one recess intended for the placing of a drinking vessel in which said hole for insertion of the thumb is placed in the bottom of a recess intended for the placing of the drinking vessel which recess on a distance from said bottom shows a step pointing inwards in the recess and provided to carry the bottom of the drinking vessel thereby forming a space under said bottom of the drinking vessel for the thumb.

6. Serving tray constructed and arranged substantially as described herein with reference to and as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2 or Figure of the accompanying drawings.